

North Waltham Neighbourhood Plan

Communication Strategy

Introduction

A Neighbourhood Plan (NP) is a community-led framework for guiding the future development, regeneration and conservation of an area. The foundation of a good Neighbourhood Plan is a robust programme of consultation, and engagement with all stakeholders. Effective community involvement is essential, right from the beginning of the process, as this will create a well-informed plan and a sense of ownership which will help to deliver a positive outcome at the referendum. Obtaining the recognition, views, assistance and support of a whole range of other interested bodies and parties is also essential if the plan is to have authority and credibility. People are more likely to participate if they are kept informed and receive feedback, which demonstrates how their views have shaped the planning process. Ownership of the plan facilitated through community engagement will help towards delivering a positive outcome at the referendum stage. A successful Communication Strategy is a prerequisite therefore to ensure that the Neighbourhood Plan is owned by and reflects the views of the whole community.

Aims

The aims of the Communication Strategy are:

- To increase awareness and understanding of the Neighbourhood Plan, its purpose and relevance;
- To set up a system to facilitate effective two way information and communication channels to enable community participation;
- To use community feedback to inform decision making.

Principles of effective communication

- Communication must be open, meaningful, understandable and appropriate
- Information and communication channels used should be appropriate to the audience and must be accessible to all
- Quality media and methods must be used whenever possible

- Information must be relevant and in plain English
- Consideration needs to be given to the needs of people with disabilities and those whose first language is not English
- The process must be transparent.

Target Audience

Everyone with a stake in the future of the area, including people living, working, owning land or doing business here.

Messages

It is important that all our communications have as much impact as possible. To avoid dilution of the message or contradiction, the following will be the main messages that we will attempt to relay in our communications:

- The Neighbourhood Plan is a framework for the development of our area
- The Neighbourhood Plan reflects community opinion
- We want to hear your opinion
- We need the participation and support of the community.

The messages we send out should be:

- Short and to the point;
- Not conflicting;
- In plain English;
- Focused on enabling involvement and engagement.

Communication Methods

We shall use a variety of methods of communication based on reaching people most effectively and with the most credibility.

These will include:

- Basingstoke and Deane local Councillors
- North Waltham website (<http://www.northwaltham.net>)
- Dedicated email address (nwneighbourhoodplan@gmail.com) –to check
- Parish magazine
- Annual Parish Meeting
- Posters/flyers
- Questionnaires
- Consultation links with local groups and organisations
- Link with local school and pre-school
- Involvement in local events, e.g. Big Lunch/fetes
- Social Media
- Parish Council networks
- Focus groups and open sessions to give information and exchange information
- Other methods suggested by the Neighbourhood Planning Group.

The messages will be relayed using different methods for different groups.

A ‘method of communication’ matrix has been developed as an integral part of the communication strategy.

Resources

We shall make best use of the resources we have and strive to increase resources commensurate with the task. Our current resources, those that we have access to and can be applied to the task, are:

- Neighbourhood Planning group members;
 - North Waltham Parish Council
 - North Waltham Village Trust
- Bought in consultancy time (eg site appraisals)
- Basingstoke and Deane Councillors
- Basingstoke and Deane Council staff

Timescales *(note- not yet complete- needs to tie in with main project plan)*

Preparing a neighbourhood plan is a sequential process based upon an agreed project plan.

The project plan identifies the following key communication points and the dates in which they should be carried out:

Key communication point	Date
North Waltham Neighbourhood Plan launch	November 2015
First consultation, community and local groups/organisations	February 2016
Establish a shared vision	March 2016
Open meeting Annual Parish Meeting	April 2016
Information sharing and villager views	June 2016
Second consultation (questionnaire)	April 2017
Sharing draft plan	
Seek approval (referendum)	

Evaluation and Amendment

After each key point the NP Group will carry out a communications audit to assess the effectiveness of the strategy with both 'internal' and 'external' audiences. We shall consider in particular, who has not responded or reacted to our communications and how best to address any issues. Use this to amend and improve the Strategy as appropriate.

Methods of communication

Key audience	Key tools	Notes	Frequency	Responsibility
Local residents and local groups /organisations	Parish magazine	Brief updates	Bi-monthly	RK/WT
	Website	Use North Waltham website www.northwaltham.net	Bi-monthly	RK/WT. GC to upload
	Social media	NW Facebook page	Bi-monthly	RK/WT. AS to upload
	North Waltham Neighbourhood Planning email address	Ensure all community has email address	Monthly monitoring	RK/WT
	Posters/fliers/leaflets	To advertise events/updates to community	When necessary	RK/WT
	Surveys/questionnaires	Use Village Trust method to ensure as representative sample as possible.	When necessary	RK/WT. All members to distribute and collect
	Notice boards	Use Parish Council noticeboard	Bi-monthly	RK/WT. Clerk to include on board
	Community events/drop-in events	At least three during planning process	When necessary	All members
	Minutes of meetings and key documents (eg vision statement and objectives)	To be available on request (as Parish Council minutes)	Monthly	RK/WT
Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council	Letters to/communication with council		When necessary	B and D liaison team (ET/HP)

	Project plan		At start of process and as necessary thereafter	GC
Local landowners and businesses	Letters to/communication with landowners/local businesses		When necessary	NT

Statutory consultees (Note to all- not sure if these are right or what/who else we should include- ideas?)

Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council			
Environment Agency			
Highways Agency			
Utilities?			

Stage consultation

Number	Action	Outcome	Lead	Date	Completed
1	Establish a dedicate email address, establish regular Parish magazine articles and a mechanism to link with North Waltham website and facebook page	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide information on what a Neighbourhood Plan is. • Keep the community up to date on project development with frequent updates. • Put on basic route map for Neighbourhood Plan development 	GC,RK,WT		
2	Promotion to advertise first questionnaire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Article in Parish magazine and on website and facebook • By letter to local groups and organisations 	RK	February 2016	February 2016
3	Questionnaire (three open questions) delivered to local residents and local groups and organisations (online or paper through dropbox in shop)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform the community on their involvement in the neighbourhood plan • Collect, collate and analyse community views to assist in the formation of the vision for the plan. 	RK	March 2016	March 2016
4	Presentation at Annual Parish Meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide information on what a Neighbourhood Plan is. • Keep the community up to date on project development to date. • Inform the community on how they can contribute to the developing neighbourhood plan). 	NT/SR PH/RK/WT	April 2016	April 2016
5	Publicity event at Big Lunch/Church fete	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collect, collate and analyse community views on the neighbourhood planning priorities 	GC	June 2016	June 2016

6	Questionnaire to all villagers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine aim and rationale • Produce questionnaire and print • Publicise locally in parish magazine, on website • Distribute to all households in village • Collect completed questionnaires 	Whole group	March/April 2017	
7	Analyse questionnaire findings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyse data • Present and report findings 	Whole group	May/June 2017	
8					
9					
10					